

IMPROVING IRELAND'S GUIDANCE SERVICES

by

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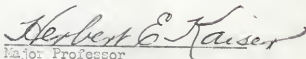
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The writer also wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the unknown authors of articles in items (12) and (19) in his bibliography. His appendix is based on these articles.

INTRODUCTION

The closing years of the 1950s will be noted by future historians as a milestone and possibly as a watershed in Irish history.

Previously, the Irish nation had tended to look inward and backward. Protectionism had been the key word in economic affairs. Insularity had been the nation's trade mark. The Irish had begun to lose faith in their country. "Can any good come out of Ireland?" Against this background the change when it came seemed all the more dramatic.

The immediate cause of the change was simple. The leader of the ruling political party retired; a new leader took his place. Changes were initiated. Protectionism was abandoned in favor of freer trade. Foreign companies were encouraged to set up plants. Tourism began to boom. The national airline began to fly the Atlantic. A seat in the United Nations was secured and soon an Irishman became president of this great assembly. Most important of all, the success which attended these ventures had a profound effect on the Irish mind. Neurotic pre-occupation with the past began to change to a more healthy desire to take up a position in the mainstream of twentieth century life.

In the midst of this transition, a cold eye was cast on a number of the country's cherished institutions. Some aspects of the Irish educational system were evaluated and criticized. Some deficiencies were uncovered. Possible improvements were suggested. Parliamentary speeches, editorials, and articles in the public press began to contain

a steadily increasing number of references to "guidance," "guidance services," and "vocational counseling," with the implicit assumption, in many instances, that herein was to be found the educational panacea. The Irish Department of Education supported the movement by announcing officially that it was considering an expansion of the guidance services available in Irish schools. Guidance was definitely in the air. And, in a way, the term "in the air" is not inappropriate. A great deal of woolly thinking characterized references to guidance and guidance services. Many persons were unsure what guidance services could be expected to achieve. Conjectures were made, hypotheses were developed, conclusions were drawn. There was clearly a need for scientific research before educated guesses became accepted as proved truth. Tentative beginnings were made a few years ago, mainly in the field of testing, but it is safe to say today that scientific research on practically any aspect of guidance in Irish education is important and valuable. The amount of research which is done will determine whether progress in Irish education is to be conscious, scientific, and systematic, or unconscious, instinctive, and haphazard.

THE PROBLEM

The Kansas State University student who wishes to write on guidance in Ireland will find that the four thousand miles between Manhattan and Ireland make certain types of research difficult, if not impossible. Action research is out of the question; interview techniques cannot be employed, the use of questionnaires is

inadvisable. But the research student at Manhattan has one advantage over his counterpart in Dublin--he has the use of a well-stocked guidance library. Full use has been made of this asset.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this investigation was (1) to lay down broad guidelines for improving Ireland's guidance services and (2) to identify areas in which scientific research is necessary.

Procedures

(1) The principal research technique employed has been a review of the literature dealing with guidance, in the Kansas State University Library. Further research was carried out in the National Library, Dublin, on the author's behalf, by his friend, Mr. Donal Moriarty, B.A., H.D.E., N.T. The author's mother, Mrs. Kathleen Howard, conducted a review of educational articles in three Irish newspapers.

(2) Guidance is an inherent part of any educational system and needs to be considered as a part rather than as a whole. It would be unwise to discuss guidance in Ireland independent of its context. Therefore, the procedure adopted in this report has been to survey the Irish educational system, the position of guidance in that system, and the need for improved guidance services. Areas needing research were indicated in the course of the survey and the report concluded with proposals for the improvement of Ireland's guidance services.

EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Description of Ireland

The island of Ireland has an area of 32,598 square miles and a population of 4,277,000 (18, pp. 270-271). Its area is less than half while its population is almost double that of Kansas. It is a partitioned island--the northeastern section, known officially as Northern Ireland, is still occupied by Britain, and remains a part of the United Kingdom. This territory contains just over one-sixth of the area of the island, and somewhat less than one-third of the population (18, p. 270). The remaining five-sixths of the island is known as the Republic of Ireland (hereinafter designated as "Ireland.") Ireland has a population of just less than three million, of whom over one-fifth live in the capital, Dublin (18, p. 271). The country is predominantly Catholic. While the people are engaged mainly in agriculture, the importance of industry is steadily increasing.

Philosophy of Education

The fundamental principle of the Irish educational system is the belief that every individual human being is born to an immortal destiny. In every school, therefore, whether primary, secondary, or vocational, religion is the principal subject. The ideal is that religion should be the integrative base and vivify the teaching of every other subject (9, p. 213).

Objectives of Education

The officially-accepted definition of education aims at the "organized development of all the powers of the individual, mental, moral, and physical, by and for their individual and social uses, and directed towards union with their Creator, as its ultimate and final end" (15, p. 3).

Primary Education

The primary (national or elementary) schools in Ireland are under local denominational management. Each school has an unpaid manager who is a non-teaching cleric, priest, parson, or rabbi. This manager is responsible for the staffing of the school and its day-to-day operation. The government provides at least two thirds of the cost of building for each school and pays the entire salaries of the teachers.

The constitution of Ireland guarantees parents a free choice of school for their children. Where in any area the school-age children of any religious denomination are too few in number to warrant the provision of a school of their own, the government assists the parents and the ecclesiastical authority concerned to provide transport to the most conveniently located school of the parents' choice (9, p. 213). It should be emphasized that Catholics number about ninety-five per cent of the total population and that the majority of non-Catholics live in urban areas.

Secondary Education

By secondary education is to be understood high school or grammar

school education. The government has no part in the provision of secondary schools but merely makes capitation grants to them and pays the teachers' incremental salary. The teachers' basic salary is paid by the schools. The term "basic salary" is really a misnomer since it represents on average about a quarter to a fifth of the teacher's total salary. To qualify for incremental salary, a secondary teacher must be a university graduate, and hold the postgraduate Higher Diploma in Education. (In case any Kansas State University graduate, present or future, reads this report, it should be pointed out that the qualifications concerned may be earned at any recognized university (9, p. 213).

Secondary education is not free but the fees are low, averaging about seventy dollars per annum. The school curriculum, which by and large is of the same type as in other European countries, gives a fairly wide range of choice (9, p. 213). However, the number of subjects which a particular school normally offers is limited to seven or eight.

The demand for secondary and also for vocational education has increased steadily since the foundation of the Irish Free State in 1922 and this development has become especially marked during the past five or ten years. Today, approximately eighty per cent of Irish children between the ages of fourteen and sixteen attend school. The growth in the number receiving secondary education is particularly noteworthy. While the thirty years from 1925 to 1955 witnessed an average increase of one thousand in the numbers attending secondary schools, the six years between 1955 and 1962 saw enrollment figures jump from 55,900 to 84,816 (2, p. 368; 4, p. 455). It is likely that last year's secondary

school enrollment was over one hundred thousand. While this great increase was taking place, the population of the country as a whole remained static or decreased slightly. An increase of this nature has obvious implications for guidance services in Irish education.

Vocational Education

In 1930, there were sixty-five technical or vocational schools in the country. In that year, a vocational education act provided for the establishment of thirty-eight vocational education committees (9, p. 215). These committees are financed by the government and the local rating authority, but they are independent of the latter and have a large measure of autonomy in relation to the government. They correspond more closely than any other institution in Ireland to the American local school board. In the development of the vocational education system the main stress has always been on the practical aspects of the work with somewhat less emphasis on the general cultural subjects. In the thirty years since 1930, the number of vocational schools has risen from sixty-five to seven hundred and eighty-eight in 1960 (3, p. 479). About two thirds of these schools could be described as rural schools (9, p. 215).

Comprehensive schools. In 1963 the Minister for education announced his intention of establishing a system of comprehensive schools. These schools will offer a mixture of secondary and technical school subjects. Four of these schools are being built at this time. No information is as yet available on their curricula. It has been indicated that some type of psychological services will be made

available to comprehensive school students.

GUIDANCE IN IRELAND

Although educational and vocational guidance is not systematically organized it is undertaken as a normal part of the educational work in primary, secondary and vocational schools. Such guidance takes the form of advice by teachers to their pupils, both collectively and individually, concerning their further education or their choice of career. For vocational guidance, there are no school services in the strict sense (19, p. 79). However, the blueprint for a vocational guidance service was provided by the Commission on Youth Unemployment sent up in 1951 by the present Taoiseach (Prime Minister), Mr. Sean Lemass, then minister for industry and commerce, and under the chairmanship of Dr. J. C. McQuaid, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. This commission in its report recommended that a special section of the Department of Education be established for the general control and administration of a national system of vocational guidance. The country was to be organized in vocational guidance areas each under an expert adviser, part of whose duty would be to train full-time and part-time vocational guidance officers. It recommended that these officers be appointed by the managers of the local schools (16, p. 11). The Department of Education, at least up to the present, has ignored these recommendations.

The Dublin Vocational Education Committee have acted along the lines suggested by the commission. A vocational guidance service has

been inaugurated and is counseling boys attending schools under the committee's jurisdiction. This service is completely voluntary and pupils may or may not avail themselves of it as they wish.

The main preoccupations of the educational psychologist in charge of this service are the training of teacher counselors, the gathering of data and the computation of norms of performance on aptitude tests (10, p. 191). The committee's staff selection procedure is interesting. Mr. Tom McCarthy, the chief educational psychologist, informed the writer of this paper that "My Committee's experience in the recruitment of psychologists has been that teachers who were in our service and then seconded for training has proved more successful" (13). Standard tests devised in Britain and in other countries often require modification which takes cognizance of the differences in the social and cultural background of Irish students and that of students in those countries where those tests have been standardized. The work is necessarily slow. Good progress, however, has been made, and tests are being devised to meet Ireland's particular needs. Meantime, good practical work is being done. The results available from tests can add to the findings based on teachers' reports, etc., and advice is given after consultation between headmaster, teacher, and psychologist. This advice may concern either vocational or educational affairs (16, p. 12). Arrangements are already in train for the expansion of the scheme and for an increase in the psychological staff (19, p. 79).

It sometimes happens that secondary school headmasters invite specialists in various fields of industrial, economic, and social

activity to give talks and lectures to the pupils in order to supplement the work done by the teachers (19, p. 79). It is difficult to ascertain how extensively this practice has been adopted.

This, little though it may be, represents the extent of organized guidance services in Irish education. The word "organized" is underscored, for much that might be labelled "guidance" in American public schools would be included in curricula in Irish schools under other headings, e.g. "religion," "religious instruction." Guidance, formal or informal, exists, almost by definition, in every educational system. "Guidance services do not await the development of the specialized vocabulary of the guidance specialist nor the technical skills of the trained guidance worker" (8, p. 303). The guidance PROCESS must not be confused with currently fashionable techniques of collecting and systematizing the information which is considered useful in the process. It is safe to say that an informal system of guidance services exists in all Irish schools. It is not safe to say that this system always works efficiently or answers all the needs of Irish youth. To date, few, if any, research studies have attempted to evaluate this informal system. Until a series of comprehensive research studies is conducted, it will not be possible to calculate the extent and efficiency of guidance services in Irish education.

THE NEED FOR IMPROVED GUIDANCE SERVICES

While the previous section pointed out that Irish schools did offer guidance services, it underlined the urgent need for research

studies to indicate the effectiveness of this informal system. Such studies would almost certainly reveal needs and deficiencies which an improvement in guidance services might be expected to alleviate. But the matter must not end there. The results of these evaluative studies must be coordinated with the conclusions of similar studies in other areas of Irish life. An economic study might find that there was overcrowding in one occupation and a scarcity of workers in another. Guidance services can and should play a role in the dissemination of information of this nature. Guidance in Ireland, be it formal or informal, is part of an educational system which is supported for the most part by the national government. For this reason, and indeed for others, it has both the right and the duty to demand cooperation from and to cooperate with other state-supported institutions working towards national objectives. Set the primary responsibility for guidance where you will, the guidance of youth even in a remote school in rural Ireland is ultimately a matter for national and even universal concern. Set the emphases in guidance programs where you will, it seems eminently reasonable that guidance services should serve the whole child in all possible ways--and this includes serving him through the community, the country, and the universe of which he is a member. Indirect service to the child through service to his teacher is part of the guidance point of view. In an ideal situation this concept should be extended to embrace all facets of a child, both inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, while educational affairs, cultural affairs, economic affairs, etc., may have distinct and separate problems, they should not all be considered as

being completely independent of each other. When national needs have been identified, methods will have to be devised to cater for them. It would be foolish to assume that an improvement in guidance services would solve most of Ireland's problems. It does seem reasonable to assume that an improvement in guidance services might considerably reduce the ill effects of some of these problems. In view of Ireland's limited financial resources, it is imperative that national investment should pay maximum returns.

While an organized expansion of guidance services must not be initiated until educational and other national needs have been identified, it is possible to point out certain areas where an immediate improvement is highly desirable. The information service, both occupational and educational, has obvious deficiencies. There is a grave dearth of books on matters connected with the choice of vocation. As far as the author is aware only one comprehensive source of occupational information is generally available throughout the country. This is the Guide to Careers, published about ten years ago by the Irish Independent, the country's leading daily newspaper. The guide was originally published as a series of newspaper articles. The success of the series led to their being translated into book form and several reprintings were necessary to cope with the demand. A revised edition was published a few years ago but the only substantial textual alterations concerned occupational salary and wage scales. Inadequate though this publication may be, it still remains the only popular publication dealing with occupations in Ireland which is readily

available to pupils and parents.

The educational information service labors under an even greater handicap. Nowhere is it possible to find a publication listing the scholarship opportunities available to primary, secondary, vocational, or even university students. The entrance requirements of each of the country's five universities may be ascertained by writing to the university in question; no popular comprehensive work lists these requirements. It is possible to take some of the required courses leading to a university degree in certain fields in some of Dublin's Colleges of Technology. Many persons are unaware of the terms of these regulations. Limited though Ireland's educational resources may be, her people are not fully utilizing those which do exist due to a faulty information service.

The actions and statements of various bodies and individuals throughout the country indicate that, in their opinion, existing guidance services are insufficient to meet present day needs. The minister for education has publicly stated on at least two occasions that his department was considering the expansion and improvement of the country's educational services. This department is presently considering applications for at least four positions as educational psychologists (11). It has established an educational research unit in St. Patrick's College, Dublin (the male elementary teacher-training college). Unofficially, it seems that the unit's main concern is testing, with an emphasis on elementary school testing. Two new research officers are scheduled to join the staff in the near future (5). A symposium on

career guidance was held recently in one of the country's larger cities. The theme emphasized that the choice of a career is too important a matter to be left to the unaided judgment and experience of the school leaver. After the symposium a new career guidance service was launched by a body known as the Limerick Scientific Council (12). At the annual meeting of the Irish National Teachers' Organization, Donal O'Scannail, the president, urged that there should be some provision for vocational guidance in schools (20). One of the country's county councils, that of Meath, has made provision in its educational budget for the appointment of a vocational guidance officer for the country's vocational school students. According to a newspaper report, the chief duties of this individual would be to assess the capabilities of the one thousand odd technical students in Meath as to what careers their abilities would be best suited. The officer would also have the task of lecturing to parents on the preparation needed by their children to enter chosen occupations.

The above list is by no means exhaustive. The only possible conclusion is that there is a body of opinion in the country which is dissatisfied with the present guidance services and which favors their expansion and improvement.

Ireland and the Irish educational system, the setting in which guidance services operate, have been presented. The extent of formal guidance services were indicated. It was also suggested that many research studies were necessary to ascertain the extent and efficiency of the formal and informal guidance available both in and out of

school to Irish children. National as well as educational needs must be studied carefully and thoughtfully and the case for guidance must be proven before the government will be justified in expanding guidance services on a national basis. The obvious deficiencies of one service, the information service, imply that it will not be difficult to make a case for guidance improvements. Finally there was a listing of some of the bodies and individuals who by action or by words have in recent years expressed their dissatisfaction with the extent and efficiency of the present system.

It would be futile to formulate detailed proposals for improving Irish guidance services until the needs which these services are designed to alleviate have been carefully ascertained. Subjective opinion should not supersede the findings of scientific surveys. It is, however, possible and desirable, irrespective of the deficiencies which research studies may uncover, to lay down certain broad guidelines along which the development of Irish services may take place. The next section will state and define these guidelines.

PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN GUIDANCE

BASE FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Evaluation of the present guidance program will underline its deficiencies. Even more important, it will uncover the base on which future development must take place. Ireland is not about to initiate guidance services; she intends to improve and expand those which already

exist. One may not say with St. John, "Et lux lucet in tenebris et tenebrae non comprehenderunt." It is not a question of bringing light into darkness. Hatch and Stefflre, professors at Michigan State University, elaborate on this point:

Too often, insufficient recognition is given to the services already present. The assumption is made that all is darkness, awaiting the light of new guidance services. Such an attitude disassociates the present staff from the proposed program and implies that schools can exist with no guidance taking place. Such an attitude does not pay sufficient homage to the teachers and administrators who have for years seen that guidance services are an essential part of any educational program, and have supplied these services to the best of their ability and within their time allotments (8, pp. 302-303).

There seems to be little need to elaborate on the thought so felicitously expressed by the joint authors. It is extremely important that those who will be concerned with the improvement and expansion of Ireland's guidance services realize the implications of this thought. In the first place, justice demands that credit be given where it is due. In the second place, the effectiveness of the guidance program depends to a large extent on the whole-hearted cooperation of all guidance workers. Recognition of their past efforts will help ensure their future cooperation. It must be emphasized that improvement and expansion will result in making better tools, consultative services and increased assistance available to guidance workers. In other words, the past contributions of guidance workers are recognized while they are assisted to do a better job in the future. Criticisms of past work must be avoided. "Teachers are often strongly resistant to change, and this resistance is a contributing factor in the lag we find in

education between research knowledge and field application" (1, p. 315). In improving the program care must be taken that words such as "change", "innovation" be used as infrequently as possible. Improvement should not be psychologically threatening. The future expansion of guidance services in Ireland cannot afford to fail because of poor human relations. Construction needs a secure base.

NATION-WIDE RESPONSIBILITY

Guidance has both the right and the duty to cooperate with and to demand cooperation from other state-supported institutions working towards national objectives. Financial and physical resources in Ireland are scarce and have to be deployed with the greatest care to secure optimum returns. Duplication of services cannot be justified. There are many good reasons for integrating educational investment with the needs of other sectors of national economic life. Economic theorists from Adam Smith to Karl Marx have stressed the influence of education on economic and social development. Although poor in natural wealth, Ireland has, at the present time, a natural resource of which no other Western European country can boast--an abundance of manpower. The country's primary resource is its people. The improvement and expansion of guidance services may be regarded as an investment in the country's primary resource and such investment may be expected to yield increasing returns of economic progress.

In past years, Ireland has invested heavily in material assets, sometimes with disappointing returns. These returns might have been

greater if more money had been invested in human development. The accumulation of physical capital without corresponding investment in human development is entirely insufficient for economic growth and social development. Perhaps an expansion of guidance services might be the best and most effective method to promote economic development.

Ireland may have invested unwisely in the past; she may benefit considerably if she invests in human development. The underscored words in the last sentence underscore the need for careful planning, constructive thought, and scientific research. The greater the number involved in thinking through the country's problems, the more likely it is that these problems will be solved. For this reason "Nation-wide Responsibility" was chosen as title for this section. It is highly desirable that all interested individuals and bodies in the country be invited to participate in the thinking-through process. A real effort must be made to get people involved.

Guidance is a nation-wide responsibility. It is everybody's business. Every citizen can participate in the task of improving the country's guidance system. Every citizen, directly or indirectly, pays taxes. Improvement and expansion necessitates capital expenditure. The decisions made by the voters at the polls make it politically possible or impossible for a government to devote money to guidance purposes. Each and every worker is a potential resource person. He may be invited to participate in occupational research by completing a questionnaire to the best of his ability. He may be requested to spend some of his free time being interviewed by a research worker. The local

school may ask him to talk about his occupation. It need hardly be mentioned that in his role as parent he can contribute importantly toward the guidance point of view. He can assist rather than coerce his children in decision-making. In his personal life, he interacts with many other people and his effect upon them may or may not be conducive to the guidance point of view. If he is an employer, he can listen sympathetically to teacher requests for permission to visit his place of business, and to requests for information about the types of work carried on by his employees. He may be in a position to provide some children with work experience. He may help some child stay in school by providing him with part-time employment. If he is a major employer, he may see fit to endow a guidance scholarship. The trade unionist can use his vote and personal prestige to ensure that his union cooperates in occupational research projects. It is clear that every citizen can participate in creating a climate in which guidance services can expand fruitfully.

One is justified in maintaining that guidance is everybody's business by pointing out that everybody benefits, directly or indirectly, from guidance services. It is economically desirable that the country be made up of competent and capable individuals. In the normal course of events, significant progress in one area helps development in another. An efficient guidance service should prevent overcrowding in one occupational field, and a scarcity of workers in another. It should reduce wastage in the tax-supported educational system. By fitting the right man to the right job and the right job to

the right man, it can contribute substantially to the happiness of individuals (and happiness tends to be infectious), and to the smooth and efficient functioning of the economy. And everybody benefits from economic progress. When a business concern prospers, it normally increases its contribution in the form of taxation to the national treasury. Its workers may earn more and pay more income tax. Employment may expand, thereby increasing individual happiness and, incidentally, individual tax contributions, as well as saving unemployment assistance. This increase in the amount of money in circulation benefits other concerns and workers. The increase in national income from direct and indirect taxation should lead either to a reduction in the tax rate, or to an improvement in the services which tax money supports, thereby benefitting everybody. If a person's main concern is for national, social or cultural progress, rather than for economic progress, it seems axiomatic that there cannot be social advance except on the basis of economic advance, and the more economic improvement there is the more social and cultural progress is possible.

National involvement of the type mentioned can be secured. It has already been achieved at local and national levels in the field of tourism. But, as in the case of tourism, involvement will be possible only if an all-out effort is made to secure and retain it. The economic resurgence described in the introduction and the success attending the tourism drive make it all the more likely that public involvement can be achieved. The improvement and expansion of guidance services may well become a symbol and focal point of both national and educational

resurgence in Ireland.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOLS

The preceding section has emphasized nation-wide involvement in and responsibility for the improvement of Ireland's guidance system. However, varying degrees of involvement and of responsibility are necessary and desirable. Primary responsibility for each of the five guidance services and, perhaps, for sections of some of these services must be allocated at governmental level. One of these is the placement service.

Ireland has a nation-wide system of labor exchanges or employment offices. These are state-supported institutions, as is, in the main, the country's educational system. Since both systems are financed from the same pocket, so to speak, it seems reasonable that one should not duplicate the work of the other. For this reason, schools should not be asked to serve as labor exchanges or as placement bureaus. Irish schools should not be asked to assume primary responsibility for placement. However, since schools and employment exchanges are both concerned with placing pupils, and since the work of both contributes to the achievement of this end, a need may exist for a body to serve as a liaison between schools and labor exchanges. In Northern Ireland, a body called the Youth Employment Service appears to be performing outstanding work in this respect. It would be inappropriate to describe its work in the body of this paper but a full account may be found in Appendix A. It seems likely that a need will exist in Ireland

for a service of this nature.

Irrespective of the areas for which the schools will be given primary responsibilities, it seems obvious that they will carry the main burden of the task of guiding the country's youth. The question then arises, should guidance responsibilities be centered in the classroom teacher, since only he can adequately know the individual from daily contact? Or is guidance far too intricate to be permitted to any but the trained specialist? The question deserves careful consideration. Under the circumstances the first alternative is more desirable. The appointment of counselors and the creation of counseling centers in Irish schools would be a retrograde step. If guidance is to be pervasive, the staff must assume most of the responsibilities. If counselors are appointed, the odds are that teachers will decide that guidance is the responsibility of the counselor, and only of the counselor. And if this happens, that attitude will carry over to other aspects of Irish life with disastrous effects on the ideal of nationwide responsibility for guidance. Furthermore, the student may view the counseling relationship as artificial. This is merely the author's subjective opinion; an experimental study along the lines which he has indicated might have interesting results. Another factor to be considered is that the tradition of the teacher-based guidance service is strong. Irish schools have trusted more to the intuitive observation of teachers, intelligently and sympathetically applied to individuals, than to more scientifically diagnosed methods. The belief is that the teaching staff in a school can know the pupil in a way denied the

specialist. When the pupils are known as persons, then their abilities and aptitudes become sufficiently well-known for the wise planning of their educational and occupational choices. It is also possible that teachers might regard the introduction of "outsiders" as a reflection on past efforts. Indeed, the hiring of a large number of school counselors would hardly be financially possible at any time during the next few years. Perhaps the whole question is academic at this stage, since Ireland lacks guidance specialists.

It must not be assumed that there is no place for trained specialists. These have a valuable role to play, and are essential to the smooth running of any guidance program. Educational psychology should penetrate teacher training programs more and more deeply so that much of the task of guidance can be carried out as part of the normal job of the school. The specialized service may be assigned a research, a supervisory, a consultative, and a remedial function. In short, the specialized service would supplement the work of the school, whenever its resources proved insufficient.

All aspiring teachers do not automatically possess the guidance point of view. Teachers are made as well as born. To carry out the suggestions expounded in the two previous paragraphs, a revision of Ireland's teacher training programs will be necessary. Certain curricular changes will be called for; possibly courses dealing with principles and practices of guidance, counseling psychology, and a counseling practicum would be introduced. However, a discussion of these curricular changes would be inappropriate at this stage. Teachers

already in service would be provided with in-service training. The task of educating the educators may assume major proportions; the author is optimistic that the results will justify both effort and expenditure.

THE ROLE OF THE STATE

The role of the state in improving Ireland's guidance services is somewhat akin to that of a school administrator, whose school is embarking on an improvement program. Its primary functions will be, perhaps, the assumption of over-all leadership, and of generally facilitating the development of improvements. It will have to assume responsibility for the selection and training of an adequate number of personnel. It has a role in providing necessary facilities, including supervisors and consultants. Interpreting improvement programs to the nation, as well as coordinating the work of various state and other institutions, are its responsibility. While this list is not exhaustive, it does give an indication of the role which the state must assume.

Before concluding this section, two opinions must be expressed. In the first place, it is desirable that the state encourage local initiative by allowing schools a certain measure of autonomy. In the second place, the state must ensure that salaries and conditions are such as to attract the best qualified persons to accept the challenge of improving the country's guidance services.

THE TRAINING OF SPECIALISTS

The needs of Ireland's guidance program will determine the number

of specialists required, and the training which they will receive. It seems likely that the country will ultimately set up its own training institutions. In the meantime, some research into the availability of specialized training opportunities is necessary. The author, in his review of the literature, has located three courses in England which Irish guidance workers could attend. A one-month residential vocational guidance course is offered each year at Birkbeck College in London. One may also take a correspondence course, sponsored by the Institute of Youth Employment Officers, which leads to a diploma in vocational guidance (19, p. 173). A snippet, in a recent number of the Personnel and Guidance Journal, mentioned that Professor C. Gilbert Wrenn would spend part of the 1965-1966 academic year at the University of Keele at Sheffield, England, helping establish a counselor training program (17). It seems possible that similar facilities exist in other parts of England of which future guidance workers in Ireland might be able to avail themselves, if they proved suitable.

CONCLUSION

The author wishes to emphasize that this has been a preliminary study, an exploratory venture into virgin territory. The philosophy and objectives of Irish education have been described, as well as the organization of primary and post-primary education. The state rather than the community claims education as its preserve and the state department of education holds the primary position. Guidance is an inherent part of the Irish educational system. However, educational

and vocational guidance is not systematically organized but is undertaken as a normal part of the educational work in primary, secondary and vocational schools. The author has been unable to locate any scientific evaluation of this informal system.

The conclusion has been reached that a comprehensive series of research studies must be undertaken before one may speak with any certainty about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness, the virtues or defects, of guidance in Ireland. The findings of these evaluative studies must then be coordinated with the conclusions of similar studies of other areas of Irish life. When national stock-taking has been completed, when national strengths and weaknesses have been identified, areas from which guidance services may draw support as well as those in which they may alleviate needs may be defined.

Since Ireland is poor in financial and physical resources, all state expenditure must be carefully designed to yield optimum returns. This objective will not be attained without constructive thought. The implications of the improvement of guidance services must be fully considered. For example, the effects of educational and vocational guidance on all areas of Irish life must be planned and deliberate, rather than haphazard and accidental. The urgent need for an improvement in Irish guidance services is borne out by the author's superficial study of the information service, and by the actions taken by bodies and by individuals to remedy what they consider to be deficiencies.

It would be futile to formulate detailed proposals for improving Irish guidance services, until the needs which these

services are designed to alleviate have been scientifically ascertained. It is possible and desirable, at this stage, to lay down broad guidelines along which the development of Irish guidance services may take place. The improvement and expansion of Ireland's guidance services should be based on those which exist at present. Guidance, while maintaining its primary responsibility to the child, should cater for national as well as educational needs. All appropriate national resources should be utilized to ensure the success of the guidance program. All citizens have some degree of responsibility for improving guidance services. In the school, guidance responsibilities should be centered on the classroom teacher, which the guidance specialist is assigned specific roles. The State's role is mainly that of leader and administrator. Some remarks on the training of specialists concluded the report.

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APPENDIX

A

THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERVICE BOARD

The Youth Employment Service Board, which was set up under an act of 1961, is responsible for the establishment and development of a comprehensive Youth Employment Service (a guidance and employment service for young people) throughout Northern Ireland. The government pays eighty per cent of the cost, and the other twenty per cent is paid by the Co. Councils in proportion to their rateable valuation.

The Y. E. S. Board is answerable to the Minister of Education because youth employment is, primarily, an educational service. This service is free of charge and must be offered to all pupils during their last year of school.

The principal functions of the Youth Employment Service are:

(a) to help boys and girls in choosing a career and in finding suitable employment; (b) to help employers in the selection and recruitment of staff between fifteen and eighteen years of age; (c) to review the progress of young people in employment up to the age of eighteen.

Duties of the Youth Employment Officer

A considerable amount of the Y. E. O.'s time is spent in visiting industries and in having an on-the-spot look at jobs. These jobs range from the practical and routine type to the highly skilled and professional.

The statutory school leaving age in Northern Ireland is at present fifteen, and each term the Y. E. O. visits the school to give a school-

leavers' talk. Some weeks after the talk, he goes to the school for individual vocational guidance interviews for school leavers. Parents are invited to be present at this interview, which is both fact-finding and advisory. The Y. E. O. places before the school leaver a comprehensive school report, a medical report, and information on jobs and careers.

The pattern thus built up is considered against the background of local, regional, and even national requirements. The basic question to be decided in the vocational guidance interview is for what type or combination of types of work is this person suited. Vacancies are then examined and a search is made for the right opening before the person is finally placed in work suited to his capabilities and tastes.

A review of progress is carried out some months after placement, its main purpose being to help solve any difficulties or problems which may have arisen.

Plans For the Future

Plans and needs for the future have not yet been formulated. For the moment, the principal concern is that of ensuring the efficient operation of the service which has been established.

IMPROVING IRELAND'S GUIDANCE SERVICES

By.

DENIS LEONARD HOWARD.

B.A., University College, Dublin, 1959

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

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Manhattan, Kansas.

1965

The purpose of this investigation was (1) to lay down broad guidelines for improving Ireland's guidance services and (2) to identify areas in which scientific research is necessary.

The principal research technique employed has been a review of the literature dealing with guidance, in the Kansas State University Library. Further research was carried out in the National Library, Dublin, on the author's behalf, by his friend, Mr. Donal Moriarty, B.A., H.D.E., N.T. The author's mother, Mrs. Kathleen Howard, conducted a review of educational articles in three Irish newspapers.

A comprehensive series of research studies must be undertaken before one may speak with any certainty about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness, the virtues or defects, of guidance in Ireland. The findings of these evaluative studies must then be coordinated with the conclusions of similar studies of other areas of Irish life. When national stock-taking has been completed, then national strengths and weaknesses have been identified, areas from which guidance services may draw support as well as those in which they may alleviate needs may be defined.

Since Ireland is poor in financial and physical resources, all state expenditure must be carefully designed to yield optimum returns. This objective will not be attained without constructive thought. The implications of the improvement of guidance services must be fully considered. For example, the effects of educational and vocational guidance on all areas of Irish life must be planned and deliberate, rather than haphazard and accidental. The urgent need for an improvement

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